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ABSTRACT

The first section of this paper presents a review of recent studies on teacher burnout. Although a number of specific stressors have been explored, those which appear most consistently in studies on the subject are in the general categories of conduct and discipline of pupils, misbehavior and poor student attitudes, personal teaching competence, maintenance of values and standards within the classroom, and disagreement with supervisor or administrator. Other factors also appear as major contributors to stress, such as pressures precipitated by accountability laws, large classes, low salaries, intense pupil dependence and declining community support. Another factor compounding the effects of such stressors was seen to be related to the teacher's perception of self as well as the profession. The paper then discusses findings from two inventories, The Teaching Events Stress Inventory and The Life Events Inventory, administered to teachers attending stress workshops. A summary of the results confirm the supposition that the issue of teacher stress and burnnout is highly complex when viewed from the perspective of professional and adult development and their various stages in each individual teacher. A list of the most salient observations from the study is provided. Several charts and line graphs are included in the document. (JD)

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Burnout: Coping with Predictable Professional Life Crises

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The impact of everyday life events and the toll that they can have upon the human organism is discussed throughout the medical and behavioral science literature. The rate of the wear and tear upon the human organism caused by these events results in damaging effects upon the organism. According to Selye (1975) the stress that one experiences is reflected by this wear and tear which is caused by our life experiences. Furthermore, Selye states that these "stressors", or the wear and tear experiences that lead to stress, have cumulative health-threatening consequences. The cumulative effects of stressors are also outlined in Glass and Singer's (1972) adaptive-cost hypothesis which focuses upon the requirement of cognitive work to deal with stressors. There are certainly many critical events or "life events" as termed by Holmes and Rahe (1967) that have been shown to be directly related to the degree of stress which an individual experiences at any given point. Holmes' and Rahe's "social readjustment scale" lists many of these events ranging from death of spouse to minor violations of the law. It is interesting to note that events related to occupation are included, but not weighted among the highest stressors. Conversely, in Selye's (1975) description of the stressors of daily life the first factors focused upon were those related to occupation before he dealt with environmental factors such as "social and cultural stressors."

This research is premised upon the fact that the events or stressors one encounters as part of one's profession or occupation are paramount. These stressors certainly play a major part in compounding the degree of stress experienced by individuals and the

resulting deleterious effects upon one's health and one's functioning. The effects of occupational stressors are clearly illustrated through the work of Russek (1974), a research professor of cardiovascular diseases. Russek studied the relationship of specific factors known to be related to coronary problems through comparing coronary patients to individuals without coronary troubles. Ratios were reported which indicated that high fat diet (2.7:1) and use of tobacco (2:1) were major contributors. Heredity and obesity commonly thought to be high risks were reported at 1.7:1 and 1.3:1, respectively. By far, the most significant factor related to coronary disease detected in this study was that of occupational stress with a reported ratio of 4.6:1.

Although the literature has, to some degree, addressed the issue of stress related to occupations, most studies have concerned themselves with stressors in the field of industry and management. Indeed certain professions are potentially more stressful than others and thus provide a great opportunity for individuals in these professions to experience events which can be harmful to them as a result of stress. It is interesting to note that career demands change over time and that the teaching profession now ranks high among stressful occupations. In fact, Hunter (1977) reported that the three most stressful occupations of today are occupied by air traffic controllers, surgeons, and teachers. Pratt (1978), in a study of stress-producing events specifically concerned with the teaching profession, concluded that the largest group of stressful events related to teachers' observations of their own failure to teach satisfactorily. This phenomenon was perceived to be due in

part to the teachers' need to cope with a wide variety of teaching problems or stressors. The identification of "life stressors or events" within the profession of teaching is certainly a necessity if we are to combat the long-term effects of such stress which Maslach (1977) referred to as "burnout." The term burnout refers to gradual diminishing commitment and enthusiasm on the part of teachers for their work. This phenomenon has been documented in recent studies such as the Rand Corporation study on educational change. The Rand Study concluded that many teachers are peaking out after only five to seven years of work experience (Hechinger, 1980).

Recently, a number of investigators have begun to examine specific stressors particular to the teaching profession (Cichon and Koff, 1978; Feshback and Campbell, 1978; Harmer, 1979; Kysicicon and Satcliffe, 1978; Mazer and Griffin, 1980). Although a number of specific stressors have been explored, those which appear most consistently are in the general categories of conduct and discipline of pupils, misbehavior and poor student attitude, personal teaching competence, maintenance of values and standards within the classroom, and disagreement with supervisor or administrator. Walsh (1979) identified such factors as pressures precipitated by accountability laws, large classes, low salaries, intense pupil dependence, and declining community support as major contributors to teacher stress. One other factor which seems to compound the effects of such stressors is related to the teacher's perception of self as well as profession. The feelings of self-esteem which once came naturally with the position of teacher or educator are no longer a fringe benefit of the position (Quinn, 1978).

The specific nature of stressors and how they effect individual teachers as well as how these stressors effect the profession of education must be recognized if the profession is going to control the effects. If we are going to combat the cumulative effects of stress resulting in burnout, we must observe more closely what happens to the teacher as he/she begins their profession and moves on through the years of experience. For example, studies by Kyriacon and Sutcliffe (1978) and Harmer (1979), as well as a study conducted by the New York State United Teachers' Research and Educational Services (1979), detected a trend revealing a decline in perceived stress as well as stressful incidents with increase in teachers' age. The New York study reported the greatest incidence of stress in the 31 to 40 age group.

The studies cited above would seem to support the contention that teachers after a small number of years in the profession begin to experience the cumulative effect of stressors. Furthermore, a difference between stress levels for various age groups appears to exist, with the middle age groups most susceptable to stress effects. However, a note of caution must be observed. The nature of specific teaching stressors and indeed life stressors may be very different for teachers of varying age groups. The level of individual teacher stress, and the exact nature of stressors is a complex issue which can be properly examined as interactive with the developmental effects of the adult life cycle. Thus, a review of the literature concerning itself with adult and professional development may provide the profession with some insight into the complex issue of teacher stress and burnout.

The twin concepts of adult development and professional development form one of the major impetuses for the research on teacher stress to be discussed in this paper. The first of these concepts, adult development, has recently received a great deal of scientific and popular attention. In almost a déjà vu fashion, developmental psychology has addressed adult development like it did child development during the first three decades of the twentieth century. Among others, Freud, Spock, Havinghurst, Gessell, and Erik Erikson have dissected and diagrammed the normal and abnormal, as well as the expected and unexpected, steps and stages of childhood. Erikson (1950) extends the developmental stages to adolescence and adulthood, devoting three of his eight stages to adulthood. Within these three stages, Erikson defines the primary developmental tasks as intimacy versus isolation, generativity versus stagnation, and integrity versus despair.

Adult development theory and research, like its precursor child development, has new names associated with it. The best selling book, Passages: Predictable Crises of Adult Life, written by Gail Sheehy (1972), served to sensitize large numbers within the society to the notion that life between the ages of 18 and 101 is not stagnant. Sheehy, like Erikson (and indeed others), adheres to a developmental premise that characterizes much of the child development literature. She focuses upon stages of development and the crises, tasks which she labels passages, associated with the transitions between life stages. Sheehy views adult development as a common sequence of developmental stages through which all human beings traverse. She has stated "The stages are the thing, and most particularly the sequence" (1972, p. 25).

Like Erikson and Sheehy, psychiatrist Roger Gould also views adult development as an unfolding series of stages with unique tasks to be mastered and crises to be expectantly confronted (1972). These writers do not necessarily consider chronological age as the key factor in predicting the particular developmental stage for a given individual at any given moment.

Among the adult development researchers who consider age to be of central concern is Daniel J. Levinson et al. (1977, 1978). Their research on the seasons of men's lives was based upon intensive study of forty selected males between the ages of 18 and 45 and was designed to identify the "relatively universal, genotypic, age-linked adult developmental periods within which variations occur" (Levinson et al. 1977, p. 21). These biological, psychological, cultural and structured (economic and social) variations are believed to operate in only partial harmony with each other. Nevertheless, according to Levinson, an individual at a given age will, with only little variability, be in the same phase of the adult life cycle. Levinson has outlined six stages between the ages of 20 and 45.

Bernice Neugarten opposes Levinson's view that the adult life cycle proceeds through well defined stages and instead emphasizes "individual fanning out" (Neugarten 1979). That is, Neugarten believes that as individuals grow older they confront choices which must be mastered in the context of historical time and social time which in turn leads to an individual life cycle. Neugarten believes that individuals have, in essence, an internal clock of expectations of their life cycle and, as such, the normally expected and occurring life events do not produce trauma or crises (Neugarten 1976).

Neugarten's views are supported by the work of psychiatrist Roger Vaillant in what is now known as the Grant Study (Vaillant 1977). Vaillant's study of 200 upper socio-economic males has lead him to conclude that the life cycle is not an invariant sequence of stages with predictable crises or outcomes.

What conclusions can be drawn from the review of the various theories and empirical research on adult development particularly as we examine the professional educator and the stresses of their personal and professional lives? The literature review, in a sense, is very humbling because it quickly reveals how little we actually know about adult life cycle development. These are distinctly different theoretical orientations with markedly different views concerning the commonalities of the adult life cycle. In addition, there exists contradictory empirical findings. However, despite these difficulties it is not impossible to infer several concrete findings from the various adult life cycle theories.

First, it would appear an inescapable conclusion that individual development is not in fact stagnant between adolescence and death; that people move through a life cycle which necessitates transitions and change. The factors surrounding this change are likely to be multi-dimensional and not everyone will experience the transitions and change in exactly the same manner or at the same age. Nevertheless, because human existence occurs in a shared context of time, culture and history, there are commonalities of experience.

We also believe, like Orville Brim (1976) that it is impossible, at the present time, to establish the existence of definitive developmental stages within the adult life cycle. However, we do believe

that commonalities exist and that these common adult developmental benchmarks become more apparent when examining relatively narrow cultural or occupational subgroups. That is, as we begin to examine the adult and professional development of teachers certain commonalities do exist which begin to approximate age and stage sequencing. It is a useful concept when examining teacher stress to interrelate the predictable adult life cycle events as well as the professional developmental cycle.

The second cornerstone of our work has been the longitudinal progression of the teacher through a teaching career. While on the surface this concept may appear to be well timeworn, Cardinell (1981), Burden (1978), and Newman (1979) point out that we are just beginning to examine and appreciate the interrelationship of professional development with adult development. In fact, at the present time no single comprehensive model can be identified in the literature which interfaces adult and professional development. Studies by Bellman (1978) and Roberts (1977) have examined the teacher in light of various adult life stages. However, these studies do not tend to place emphasis upon the parallel longitudinality of the professional career. Still, other studies by Phillip (1932), Burden (1978), and Fuller (1969) have considered teachers' concerns and perceptions at various ages and stages of their careers but have not conjointly considered the significance of adult life cycle theory.

The totality of the literature on adult development and professional development clearly suggests that the teacher is, at one and the same time, an adult (living out an adult life cycle with shared commonalities) and a professional (progressing through a

career with shared commonalities). Thus, one must consider age, life stage characteristics, and professional stage characteristics before one can accurately understand the total effect of stress and stressors for any given teacher.

Table 1 presents some examples of the adult life cycle and characteristics of teaching career stages. The material represents a synthesis of the literature on both adult development and professional development. The summary is based upon six age categories which have also been utilized in later data analysis. For illustrative purposes, both Sheehy's and Levinson's comparable age categories are also presented. The table is intended to present only exemplars of the interfacing of age, adult life cycle and professional development. It is not intended to be a definitive or final elaboration of the extraordinarily complex interaction for any given teacher.

Method

The Teaching Events Stress Inventory (TESI) by Cichon and Koff (1978) was administered to teachers in seven locations in central and western Kentucky. Approximately 70 percent of the 403 TESI forms were completed by teachers during a stress workshop held near their school between November, 1980 and February, 1981. The remainder of the forms were completed by teachers in three schools as part of a graduate research class project.

The Life Events Inventory by Holmes and Rahe (1967) was also administered to a subsample of 151 teachers attending two of the stress workshops. The small n size for the LEI, particularly when viewed across age groups, limited the analyses that could be conducted with life events as stressors.

Table 1
An Overview of Adult and Professional Development

Schnacke Adams Martray Ages	Sheehy / Levinson Ages	Adult Development	Professional Development
20 - 26	20-32 Trying Twenties / 18-24 Leaving the Family	-Attempts to resolve confusion of passage into adulthood -Movement toward full adult independence -Development of tentative adult identity -Involvement in dating and marital commitments -Initial entry into an occupation -Selection of a mentor for career -Concern for change - Don Quixote syndrome -Impetious, impatient, energetic and productive	-Selection of career mentor -Period of searching for methods, techniques, and content -Tendency to overestimate students' abilities -Feelings of isolation from both peers and students not fully accepted by either group
27 - 34	28-32 Catch-Thirty / 20-29 Getting into the Adult World	-Formation of adult life style and definition of self -Establishment of first stable social relationships -Young children in the home -Major financial commitments -Formal commitments to occupation -Development of long-range goals and ambitions -Maintenance of mentor-mentee relationship -Shift from idealism to pragmatism -Potential for possible recycling of career or occupational plans accompanied by turmoil	-Period of peak commitment to profession followed by -Initial period of souring toward career and students -Realization of teacher-student generation gap -Readmission to college for advanced degrees -Period of overestimation of personal teaching skills -View of self as master teacher
35 - 39	30-38 Rooting & Extending / 30-39 Settling Down (Age 30 transition)	-Commitments to family -Maintenance in stable adult life structure -Reestablishment of long-range goals -Disintegration of mentor-mentee relationship	-The crossroads -- entrapment in or exit from the profession -Promotion for some-stagnation for others -Increasing sense of isolation -Decreased reliance on career mentor
40 - 45	35-45 Deadline Decade / 38-45 Mid-life Transition	-Period of self-reflection and potential for turmoil -Reassessment of life's meaning and goals -Concern for personal freedom and personal unpredictability -Resistance to externally imposed change -Loss of parents -Recognition of limited life span and inevitability of personal death -Potential for marital disharmony -Recognition of diminished physical skills -Recognition of diminished sexual prowess -Development of new secondary interests	-Sense of loss of the teaching challenge -Sense of pessimism and cynicism -Potential for behaviors which destroy student motivation -Tendency toward chronic complaining -Sense of growing physical fatigue
46 - 54	43 plus Renewal or Resignation / 45-56 Restabilization	-Reestablishment of stability in living patterns -Sense of self acceptance and tolerance -Sensitivity to the present -Redefinition of marriage and relationship with spouse -Children leaving home -Concern over loss of spouse and personal health -Reestablishment of stable social relationships -Selection as mentor by another person	-Reawakening of career with increasing sense of satisfaction -Reemphasis on career goals -Concern for realistic accomplishments -Reemphasis on specific teaching tasks and procedures -Selection as mentor
55 - 65		-Preparation for retirement (crisis) -Frequent loss of spouse due to death -Assumption of role as philosopher-sage	-Desire for stable, untroubled professional activity -Reflection and Reassessment of the value of career -Preparation for career exit

Due to the unscientific nature of the sample selection process, the results of the data analyses for both the TESI and LEI are not generalizable beyond this sample. However, the findings can serve as a guide to formulating more informed hypotheses about teacher professional stressors, life event stressors, and teacher development.

It should be noted that this sample represents approximately 2 percent of the teacher population in Kentucky of known age. The percentage of teachers in each of the age groups in this sample closely approximates the population age group percentage. The sample consisted of 27 percent male, 71 percent female, and 2 percent of unknown gender. There were 36 percent elementary teachers, 26 percent middle school teachers and 38 percent secondary and multi-grade level teachers in this sample.

While the sample selection process limits the scope of applicability of the findings, the administration procedures were held constant. Similar instructions were given to teachers at each site. The TESI and the LEI both contained items which were potential stress producing events. A seven-point Likert type scale was utilized for responding to each item. A zero indicated a non-applicable item. Teachers were asked to respond to the items as they applied to them at the time the instrument was administered.

Results and Discussion

Analysis of the data collected in this study, taking into account magnitude of stressor rating as well as frequency of occurrence, when interpreted in a global fashion tends to support the findings of previously mentioned studies which revealed a

decline in perceived stress as well as stressful incidents with increase in teacher age. In addition, these data supported previously mentioned findings that teachers in the general age range of 30-39 are experiencing high degrees of stress when compared to colleagues in other age categories.

Table 2

Summary Table of Projected Cumulative Stress

Age Group	20-26	27-34	35-39	40-45	46-54	55-70
Number of High or Moderately High Rated Stressors*	9	14	11	8	4	4
Number of Stressors Rated Low**	5	7	5	10	11	17

* Indicates stressors rated in the high and moderately high range (4.0 and above) which also were of reported relatively high frequency (at least 35% of respondents).

** Indicates the number of stressor items rated as relatively low in stressor press (below 3.0 mean rating) of the 36 items presented. All other items received a mean rating of at least 3.0.

The degree of cumulative stress as projected using stressor magnitude and frequency can be examined in Table 2. The number of high and moderately high rated stressors by the 27-34 and 35-39 age groups in conjunction with the relatively few low rated stressors

would indicate high degrees of cumulative stress for these age groups as well as the 20-26 age group. In contrast, the few high and moderately high rated stressors which occurred with any frequency, in conjunction with the relatively large number of stressors perceived to be of little consequence, in the 46-54 and especially the 55-70 age groups would be indicative of lower cumulative stress levels for these groups in general.

If the cumulative effect of stressor hypothesis as proposed by Selye is correct, the data in the present study would indicate that teachers in the 27-34 and the 35-39 age ranges would be most susceptible to the negative effects of stress. Teachers in the 20-26 age range indicate the next highest degree of cumulative stress with those in the 40-45 age range beginning to demonstrate a drop in degree of cumulative stress with further declines demonstrated in the next two age categories. It should be noted that these findings are interpreted in global terms and specific incidence is not dwelt upon. As will be demonstrated in the next section of this report, there are some specific stressors which present problems for all age groups while some occur infrequently but cause major stress concerns.

For purposes of analysis and clarity, stressor item data in this study were divided into four categories reflecting conflict with management, interpersonal relationships, teaching tasks, and personal security. A miscellaneous category was used for two items with which the researchers could not come to agreement as to which category these items fit. Items delegated to the four major

categories can be inspected by referring to the Data Summary Table in the appendix. Items which were designated as high (a mean stressor rating arbitrarily placed at 5.0) or moderately high stressors (a mean stressor rating arbitrarily placed at 4.0) in each of the four categories are presented in Table 3.

The first category reflecting conflict with management produced the greatest number of stressors labeled as high (mean rating of 5.0 and above). Two items placed in this category, Notification of unsatisfactory performance and Involuntarily transferred, were rated high across all age groups indicating that these stressors are of concern for all age groups when they are encountered. It should be noted that these stressors are encountered with relatively lower frequencies at older ages as was the case with most of the stressors in this category. This trend can be observed through inspection of Figure 1. Perhaps the most surprising finding in the category when the data were closely inspected pertains to the frequency of occurrence of unsatisfactory performance notification (see Figure 2). One possible explanation of this phenomenon is that teachers are perhaps interpreting even passing negative comments as notification of unsatisfactory performance. Thus, an internalization phenomenon may be operating in regard to this stressor which may require close examination in the future. Promotion denial (item 34) was a moderate stressor of relatively low frequency for the youngest and oldest age groups. This would indicate that promotions at these ages were not usually expected by most individuals, but when they were being denied is a major

Table 3

SUMMARY TABLE OF SELECTED TEACHING STRESSORS ACROSS AGE GROUPS REFLECTING MAGNITUDE AND FREQUENCY

		AGE					
No.	Item	20-26	27-34	35-39	40--45	46-54	55-70
Management							
2	Reorg. class		Moderate +				
4	Vol. transfer						Moderate*
6	Unsat. performance	High	High	High	High*	High	High*
8	Strike	High*	Moderate*	Moderate*		High*	Moderate*
11	Invol. transfer	High	High	Ext. High	High	High*	High*
34	Promotion denial	Moderate*	Moderate	High	Moderate		Moderate*
Interpers. Rel.							
29	Disagree supervisor		Moderate	Moderate	Moderate		Moderate
36	Disagree other teachers	Moderate	Moderate +	Moderate +			
Tch. Tasks							
7	Overcrowded class	Moderate +	Moderate +	Moderate +	Moderate +	Moderate +	Moderate
12	Disruptive students	Moderate +	Moderate +	Moderate +	Moderate +	Moderate +	Moderate +
23	Books/supplies	Moderate +	Moderate +				Moderate +
27	Coursework promotion	Moderate +	Moderate +	Moderate	Moderate		
Personal Security							
3	Colleague assaulted	High*	Moderate			Moderate*	High*
16	Threat of pers. inj.	High*	Moderate +	Moderate		Moderate	Moderate*
21	Student verbal abuse		Moderate +	Moderate +			

*<35% of age group rating item as a teaching stressor

+>66% of age group rating item as a teaching stressor

stressor. Denial of promotion for age groups 27-34 and 40-45 is of major consequence with the highest stress occurring in the 35-39 age group when promotion is denied. The data also indicate that when teachers encounter possible strike action (even though occurrence is low) stress is of moderately high magnitude for most age groups.

Analysis of the interpersonal relations category produced only two stressors that received ratings indicating major stress concern. These items were focused around disagreements with fellow teachers and disagreements with supervisors. Disagreements with fellow teachers was rated as a major stressor by the first three age groups indicating that the occurrence of this stressor is much more stressful for the teacher under 40 years of age than their older colleagues (see Figure 3). Furthermore, the data indicate the frequency of occurrence of disagreements with colleagues is relatively high for the 27-34 age groups. The item disagreement with supervisor did not produce high mean ratings by the youngest age group, but was perceived to be a moderately high stressor by the next three age groups which includes age ranges from 27-45. It was interesting to note that the 46-54 age group gave the lowest stress rating to this item of any of the age groups with the 55-70 age group reversing the trend and rating the item as a moderately high stressor. Interpretation of this reversal is difficult to project at this point other than to hypothesize that older teachers may be reacting to individuals with perhaps less experience.

Items grouped in the category relating to teaching tasks which were rated relatively high stressors tended to occur with more frequency than stressors in other categories. This should perhaps be noted when considering the cumulative effects of experienced stressors. Two items, overcrowded classrooms and disruptive students, produced relatively uniform moderately high stressor and high frequency ratings across all age groups. These data indicate that these two stressors are major stress sources for teachers of all ages and need to be controlled. Lack of books/supplies was perceived to be a major stressor for the first two age groups and occurred with high frequency. Teachers in the next three age groups ranging from 35 to 54 years of age failed to rate this as a moderately high stressor. Teachers in the oldest age group, however, rated this item as a moderately high stressor. Explanation of this phenomenon is difficult, but the same phenomenon did occur in a similar study previously reported by Martray and Adams (1981). The other item pertaining to teaching tasks which produced relatively high perceived stress ratings was threat of taking additional coursework for promotion. As might be expected, this item was of major concern for the two youngest age groups in terms of magnitude and frequency. The next two age groups which included the age ranges of 35-39 and 40-45 demonstrated less frequency of occurrence, but when they did experience this situation it produced rather moderately high perceived stress (see Figure 4). One other point of interest in the teaching task category that should be noted is that many of the common tasks such as lesson plans, evaluating student performance and grading, and conferences with principals/supervisors did not produce high mean stress ratings as perhaps would be expected.

The fourth category utilized for analysis purposes in this study was that of personal security. In this category the threat of personal injury item was rated highest in stressor magnitude by the youngest teachers and moderately high by the other age categories; the 40-45 age group failed to rate it as a high or moderately high stressor. It should be noted, however, that even though this age group was lower than the others, the mean rating did approach the 4.0 stressor level. The item pertaining to the assault of a colleague also produced mean stressor ratings across age groups demonstrating that this is an item of concern. As depicted in Figure 5, the middle two age groups (35-39 and 40-45), did not rate this item above the 4.0 mean stressor level while the youngest and oldest age groups rated this item as a high stressor (above 5.0) when encountered. The final item in this category was that of student verbal abuse. Although the frequency of this stressor was comparatively high for all age groups, the two groups perceiving this item as a major stressor (above 4.0) were the 27-34 and the 35-[illegible] age groups (see Figure 6).

In order to examine the relationship between teaching stress events and stress producing personal life events, a correlation study was conducted. A modified version of the Holmes and Rahe 41 item Life Events Inventory was matrixed with all of the high and moderately high teaching stress events discussed in the preceding section of this paper. This correlation study was completed on a subsample of 151 teachers ranging across all age groups. Correlation coefficients reaching the .05 level of significance and of at least .30 magnitude were placed in the matrix. Tables 4 and 5 present a summary of the findings.

Table 4

Correlations Between High and Moderate Teaching Stress Events and Life Events+

Teaching Stressors Item*	Number of Correlated Life Events Above .30 Level X**
Management Conflict	
2 Reorganization of Class	6
4 Voluntary Transfer	0
6 Notification of Unsatisfactory Performance	4
8 Preparation for Strike	3
11 Involuntary Transfer	4
34 Promotion Denial	7
Interpersonal Relations	
29 Disagree with Supervisor	20
36 Disagree with Teachers	12
Teaching Tasks	
7 Overcrowded Classroom	1
12 Disruptive Students	9
23 Books/Supplies	1
27 Additional Academic Coursework	4
Personal Security	
3 Colleague Assaulted	5
16 Threat of Personal Injury	7
21 Student Verbal Abuse	6

\+ N Size = 151

* From: Cichon & Koff, Teaching Events Stress Inventory

** From: Holmes & Rahe, Life Events Inventory (Modified)

X Correlations significant at .05 level

Analyzing the data presented in Table 4 indicated two teaching stress event items were significantly related to more life events than any of the other items. The two items, disagreement with supervisors and disagreement with teachers, were considered as interpersonal relations items and account for 36 percent of all correlations placed in the matrix. In decending order, the next three teaching stress events--disruptive students, threat of personal injury and promotion denial--were also related to a number of life events. When considered in total, these five items are of some importance in that numerous teacher stress surveys have repeatedly found them to be among the highest ranking stressors. These data would also support a commonly held belief and a hypothesis of this study that there is a relationship between teaching events and the personal life of the educator.

Table 5 identifies the life events that most frequently correlated with the high and moderately high rated teaching stress events. It is interesting to note that the top ranking item, change in sleeping habits, as well as three additional items--revision of personal habits, changes in recreation, and changes in eating habits--all share a possible common denominator. These items are almost universally recognized as characteristics of depression. Furthermore, these items reflect a state of change, and as such may be considered symptoms rather than single events. It is also interesting to note that the symptom of depression is one of the major characteristics of the burnout process.

The correlation study must be viewed as exploratory and only, at this time, suggestive of support for the notion that there is a major link between teaching events and life/career stages. Nevertheless, further studies and additional specific data analysis of the present study is warranted.

Table 5

Frequency of Significantly Correlated Life Events and Teaching Stress Events

Life Event	Frequency
Change in sleeping habits	8
Trouble with boss	6
Change in number of family get-togethers	6
Change in financial status	5
Change in number of arguments with spouse	5
Revision of personal habits	5
Change in recreation	5
Change in health of family member	4
Trouble with in-laws	4
Mortgage or loan less than $10,000	4
Change in eating habits	4

Summary

The results of this study confirm the supposition that the issue of teacher stress and burnout is a highly complex issue when viewed from the perspective of professional development and adult development with its various age/stages. Nevertheless, the following is a list of the most salient observations from this study:

1. There appear to be differences in the types of teaching stressors for various age groups. In fact, what is stressful for the 20-26 year old teacher group may, in fact, not be stressful for a 40-45 year old teacher group.

2. In general, as teachers increase in age, higher frequencies and magnitudes of stressors are encountered, peaking between the ages of 27-39. Again, and in general, following age 39 there is a decrease in frequency and magnitude of encountered stressors. Thus one can expect the cumulative effect of professional stress to be greatest between the ages of 27 and 39.

3. While selected stressor items were highly consistent across age groups (i.e., Involuntary transfers and Disruptive children), other stressor items tended to be age specific even within the four broad cluster categories of Management Conflict, Interpersonal Relations, Teaching Tasks and Personal Security.

4. By inspection, the overall stressor items which emerged in the study are remarkably consistent with two recent studies (Meza (1981) and Blackwell (1981)), which did not consider age group breakdowns. However, the more detailed analysis by age categories from this study begin to suggest that there are potentially predictable stressor differences (related to adult and professional development).

5. Three clusters, Management Conflict, Interpersonal Relations and Personal Security, contain a comparatively high number of the high ranging stressors. In a broad sense these categories represent human relations, an area of notorious difficulty for an individual

to exercise full personal control. Thus, as Cohen (1980) has pointed out, the ability or inability to control an event largely determines the stress impact of that event. Further support for this notion is offered by the relatively few number of items perceived as stressors from the Teaching Tasks category. Interpretatively, these activities may be viewed as under more personal control and therefore less stressful by teachers.

6. The proposition that life stressors and professional stressors are related was supported. In general, reported changes in personal habits and personal relationships were related positively to professional stressors, particularly those professional stress items that involved interpersonal relations. Cause and effect relationships cannot be inferred from the analyses; on the contrary, it is more likely that a cyclic process is occurring in which professional stress contributes to personal life stress and vice versa.

Further research into the nature of these life and professional stress relationships can provide a greater understanding of the teacher as she/he copes with their professional responsibilities.

It has been the intention of this paper to report on factors that effect the quality of education in public schools through the examination of those most responsible for the delivery of education--the teachers. If teachers are going to function as well as they can in their teaching environment, they must be able to counter the potentially negative effects of the stressors which they will <u>undoubtedly</u> and <u>predictably</u> encounter. Cohen (1980) in his review of

present day research and theory of the effects of stress on performance and social behavior points out two beneficial intervention strategies for decreasing the negative effects of stress. These interventions involve increased personal control and increased stressor predictability. These two factors must be considered as the education professio develops intervention strategies for dealing with the major problem of teacher stress.

Although intervention is not a major intent of this paper, the information provided from this research should begin to provide the profession with valuable information regarding stressor predictability (something that teacher educators should find of particular importance).

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FIGURE 1

Summary of Mean Rating and Reported Frequency of Involuntary Transfer

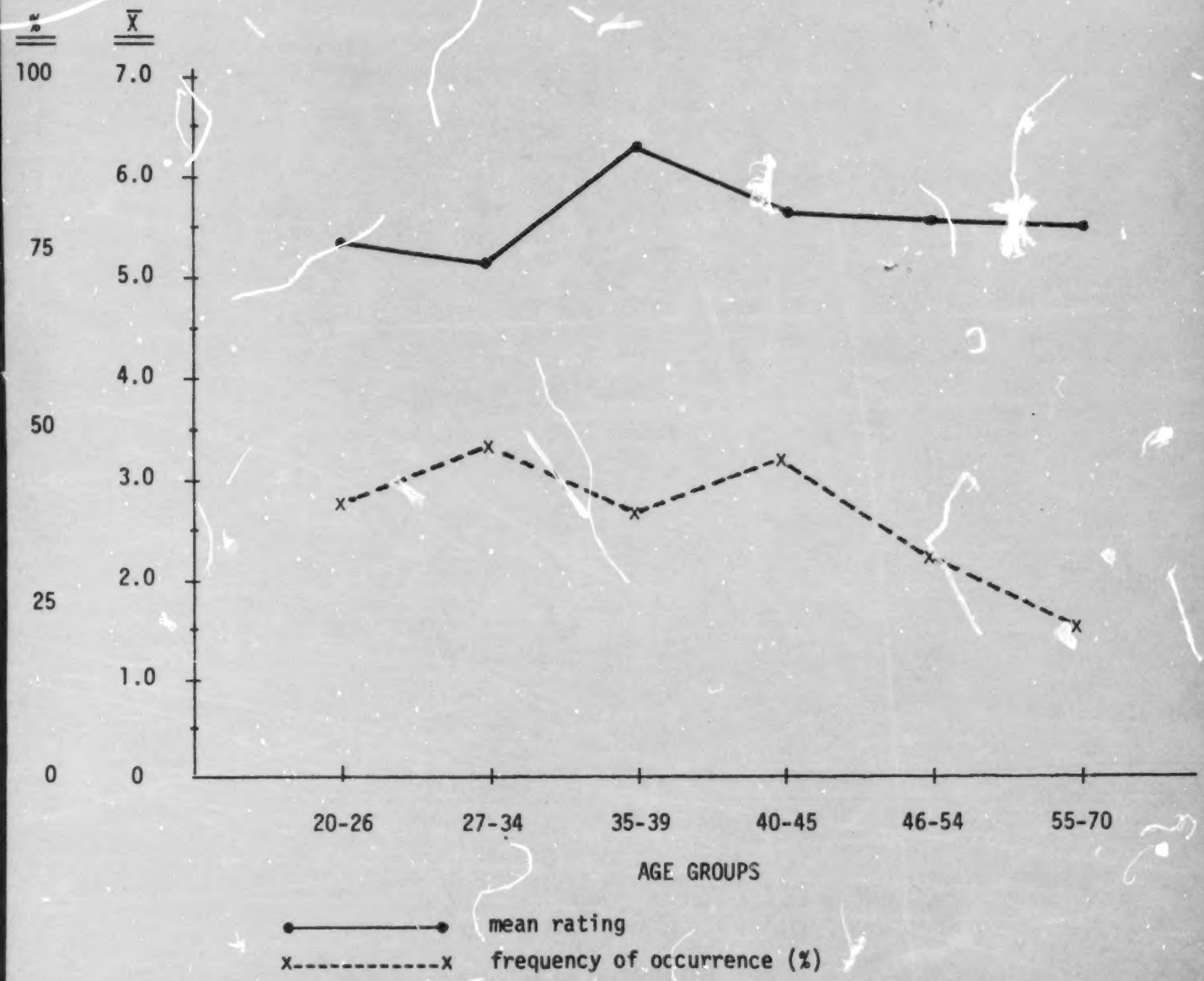


FIGURE 2

Summary of Mean Rating and Reported Frequency
of Notification of Unsatisfactory Performance

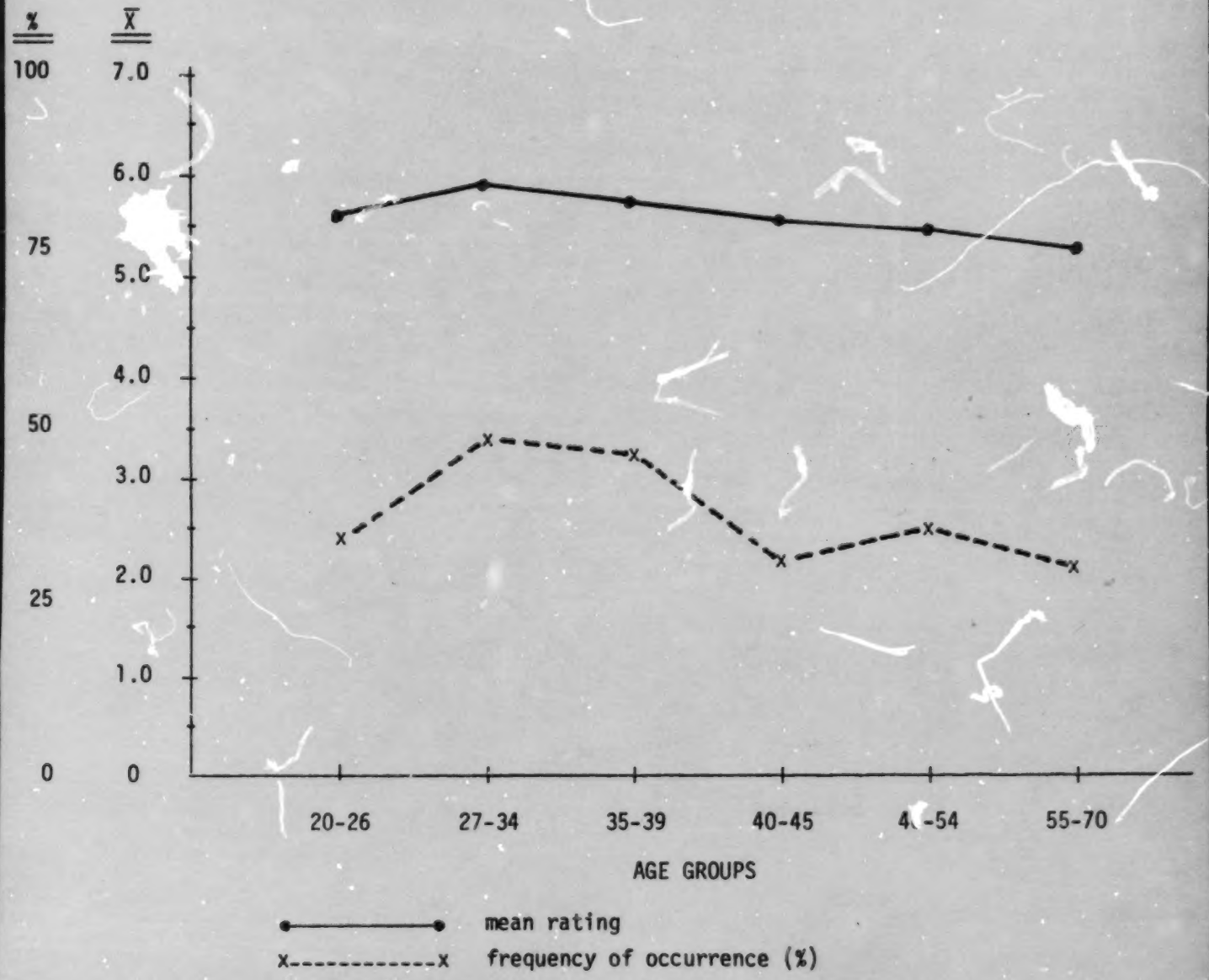


FIGURE 3

Summary of Mean Rating and Reported Frequency of Disagree with Fellow Teachers

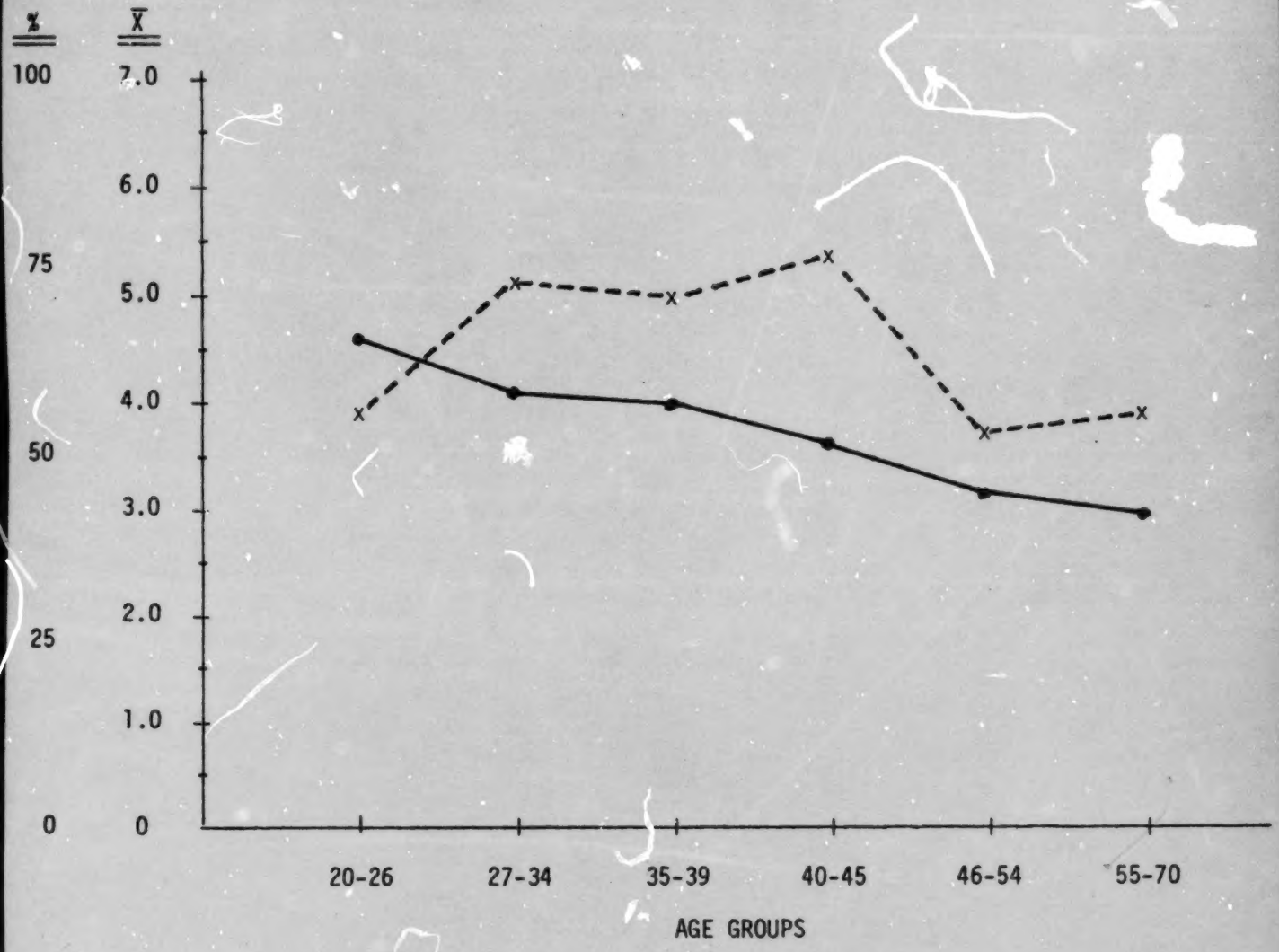


FIGURE 4

Summary of Mean Rating and Reported Frequency
of Additional Coursework for Promotion

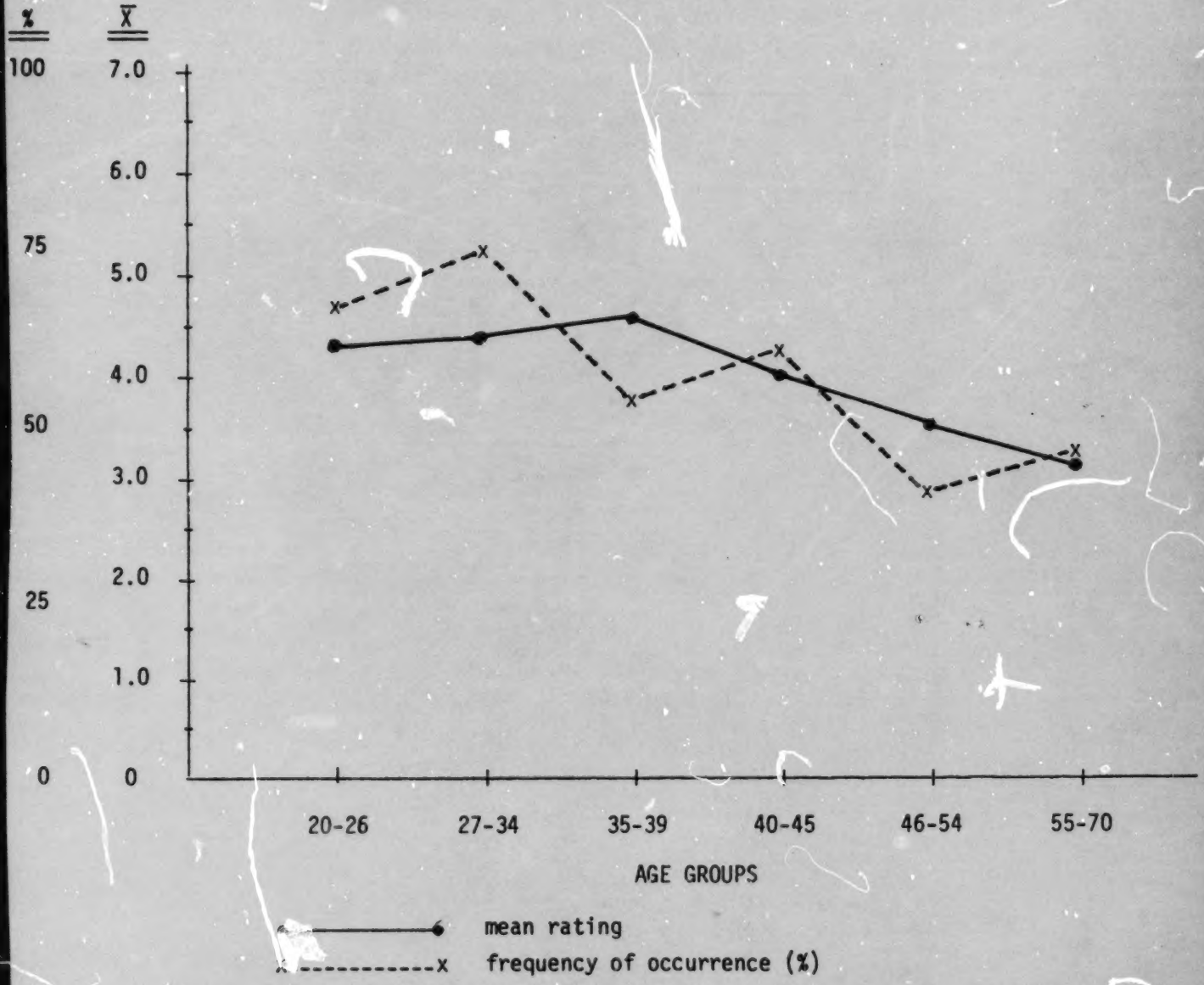


FIGURE 5

Summary of Mean Rating and Reported Frequency of Colleague Assaulted

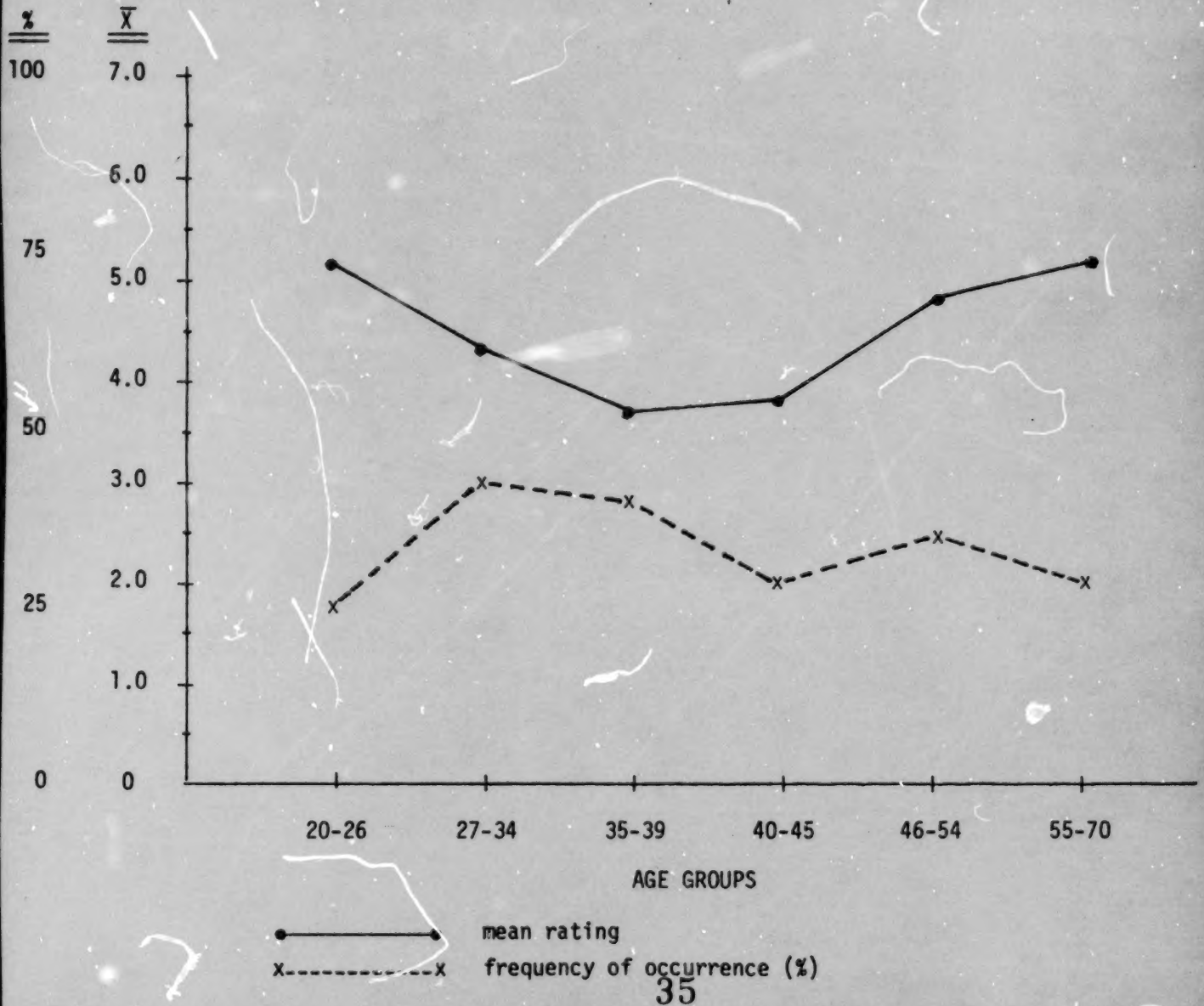
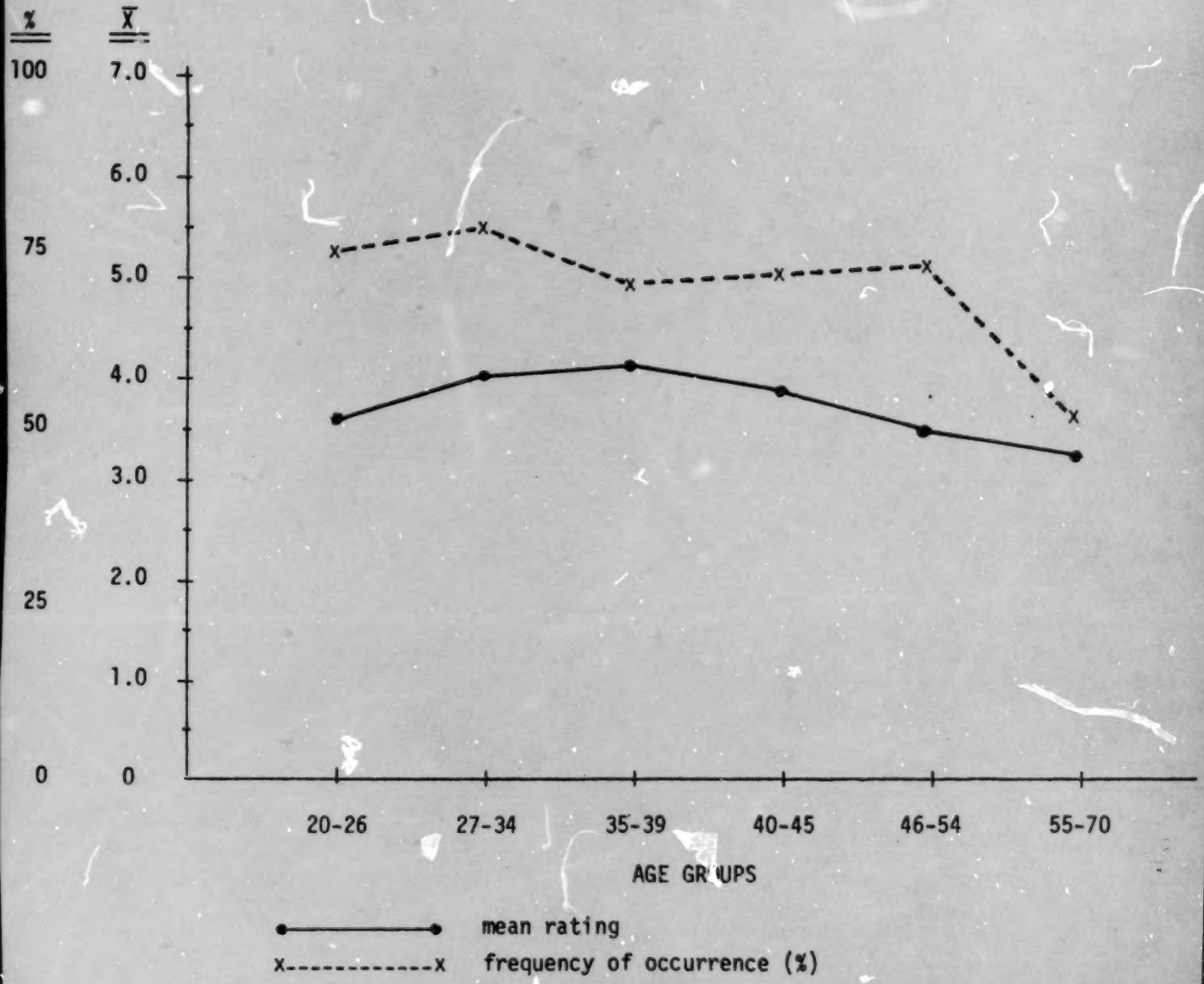


FIGURE 6

Summary of Mean Rating and Reported Frequency of Student Verbal Abuse



TEACHING EVENTS - PERSONAL SECURITY OVER AGE GROUPS

		20 to 26			27 to 34			35 to 39			40 to 45			46 to 54			55 to 70		
Item	Description	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$
3	Colleague Assaulted	11	25	5.18	60	40	4.38	31	37	3.72	18	29	3.95	14	33	4.86	6	29	5.17
16	Threat personal inj.	14	32	5.43	67	95	4.53	37	45	4.46	24	39	3.92	17	40	4.24	7	33	4.71
21	Student verbal abuse	34	77	3.65	120	80	4.00	57	69	4.09	44	71	3.96	31	72	3.52	13	62	3.31
		n = 44			n = 150			n = 83			n = 62			n = 43			n = 21		

TEACHING EVENTS - MISCELLANEOUS OVER AGE GROUPS

		20 to 26			27 to 34			35 to 39			40 to 45			46 to 54			55 to 70		
Item	Description	f	%	X	f	%	X	f	%	X	f	%	X	f	%	X	f	%	X
1	First wk. sch.	42	95	4.28	145	97	4.40	79	95	3.75	56	90	4.18	41	95	3.34	16	76	2.88
18	Self-control with anger	42	95	4.02	145	97	3.71	77	93	3.96	60	97	4.09	41	95	3.61	19	90	2.74
		n = 44			n = 150			n = 83			n = 62			n = 43			n = 21		

TEACHING EVENTS - INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS ACROSS AGE GROUPS

		20 to 26			27 to 34			35 to 39			40 to 45			46 to [illegible]			55 to 70		
Item	Description	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$
17	Comm. racial issues	14	32	3.00	71	47	2.82	37	45	3.24	31	50	3.26	18	42	3.50	9	43	2.67
24	Staff racial issues	16	36	2.44	48	32	2.50	20	24	3.20	23	37	3.17	11	26	2.55	6	29	1.67
29	Disagree. with supervisor	24	55	3.58	93	62	4.30	54	65	4.22	37	60	4.00	21	49	3.33	8	38	4.12
33	Research/train. program from outside school	18	41	2.95	74	49	3.12	50	60	2.92	40	65	2.68	26	60	2.11	11	52	2.82
35	Stud. racial issues	20	45	3.25	85	57	3.30	46	55	2.85	38	61	3.11	19	44	2.95	8	38	2.13
36	Disagree with teachers	25	57	4.52	114	76	4.[illegible]7	58	70	4.03	49	79	3.64	24	56	3.37	12	57	3.00
		n = 44			n = 150			n = 83			n = 62			n = 43			n = 21		

TEACHING EVENTS - TEACHING TASKS ACROSS AGE GROUPS

		20 to 26			27 to 34			35 to 39			40 to 45			46 to 54			55 to 70		
Item	Description	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$
5	Attend Inserv.	42	95	3.17	140	93	2.93	72	87	3.02	58	94	3.55	40	93	2.95	19	90	1.84
7	Overcrowd class	34	77	4.97	128	85	4.64	64	77	4.60	50	81	4.74	31	72	4.52	13	62	4.77
10	Conf. with princ./super.	33	75	2.97	124	83	3.23	58	70	3.14	48	77	3.42	27	63	2.52	16	76	2.19
12	Disruptive Children	41	93	4.81	146	97	4.70	75	90	4.39	59	95	4.36	41	95	4.61	20	95	4.10
14	Lesson plans	37	84	2.54	137	91	2.47	63	76	2.22	55	89	2.44	33	77	2.21	19	90	1.95
15	Supervise stud. out of class	37	84	3.08	133	89	3.33	70	84	3.24	58	94	2.97	35	81	3.31	14	67	2.00
19	Talk to parent /child's prob.	40	91	3.85	144	96	3.57	71	86	3.41	57	92	2.88	41	95	2.57	17	81	2.59
20	Lang. not Eng.	10	23	3.20	33	22	3.15	24	29	3.08	15	24	2.53	11	26	3.36	7	33	4.14
22	Eval. stud. perform./grades	43	98	3.40	141	94	3.30	71	86	3.11	56	90	3.21	33	77	3.46	19	90	3.16
23	Lack of bks./sup.	39	89	4.11	136	91	4.26	67	81	3.58	57	92	3.98	30	70	3.76	15	71	4.13
25	Below avg. stud.	38	86	3.63	140	93	3.68	73	88	3.19	57	92	3.21	38	88	3.26	17	81	3.20
27	Add. coursework for promotion	29	66	4.34	114	76	4.37	47	57	4.62	39	63	4.00	18	42	3.50	10	48	3.20
28	Phys./mentally handicapped chd.	22	50	3.55	92	61	3.57	50	60	3.62	38	61	3.26	25	58	3.84	11	52	2.82
30	Teacher/parent conference	36	82	3.67	140	93	3.44	70	84	3.19	51	82	2.92	37	86	2.43	17	81	2.23
33	Stud. pers./ achiev. records	37	84	3.22	137	91	2.93	62	75	2.81	54	87	2.69	34	76	3.00	15	71	2.40

DATA SUMMARY TABLE

TEACHING EVENTS ~ MANAGEMENT CONFLICT OVER AGE GROUPS

		20 to 26			27 to 34			35 to 39			40 to 45			46 to 54			55 to 70		
Item	Description	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$	f	%	$\bar{X}$
2	Reorg. of class	40	91	3.80	144	96	4.07	73	88	3.79	57	92	3.70	40	93	3.43	14	67	3.15
4	Vol. Trans.	12	27	3.50	58	39	2.84	31	37	3.07	21	34	2.67	13	30	2.23	5	24	4.40
6	Not unsat. perf.	16	36	5.63	70	47	5.86	38	46	5.76	21	34	5.62	16	37	5.50	7	33	5.43
8	Prep for strike	6	14	5.17	31	21	4.58	28	34	4.75	19	31	3.63	12	28	5.17	7	33	4.14
9	Change duties/ work resp.	33	75	3.36	113	75	3.90	61	73	3.62	51	82	3.39	26	60	3.27	13	62	2.54
11	Invol. trans.	17	39	5.47	69	46	5.30	33	40	6.39	27	44	5.59	15	35	5.53	4	19	5.50
13	Implem. board of ed. curric. goals	29	66	2.76	115	77	2.97	57	69	2.97	51	82	2.57	31	72	2.87	18	86	2.28
31	Princ. interven. in discipline	37	84	3.51	133	89	3.39	64	77	3.27	52	84	2.81	32	74	2.75	16	76	2.06
34	Prom. denial	10	23	4.20	66	44	4.71	35	42	5.02	32	52	4.06	14	33	3.5	4	19	4.75
		n = 44			n = 150			n = 83			n = 62			n = 43			n = 21		